



NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZING GUIDE

CITY OF BELLEVUE NEIGHBORHOOD OUTREACH

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WELCOME

Neighborhood organizing guide

Dear Neighborhood Leaders,

The City of Bellevue is strongly committed to partnering with neighbors to improve and maintain the quality of life in the diverse neighborhoods that compose our great city. Each neighborhood is as unique as the residents, businesses, faith communities and non-profits that inhabit them. Organizing a neighborhood association is an excellent way to improve your neighborhood and to develop a sense of community and neighborhood pride. Organized neighbors send a message that everyone is working together to build their community. Neighborhoods where people know each other and look out for each other are also safer, healthier places to live.

Many neighborhood associations come together when controversial issues arise. Although this is often the impetus to organize, neighborhood associations play a greater role in actively contributing to improve the quality of life for their community. Neighborhood Associations are pivotal in a broad range of activities including:

- ✧ building community
- ✧ preserving neighborhood character and identity
- ✧ making neighborhood improvements
- ✧ improving neighborhood safety and emergency preparedness
- ✧ connecting with the City, business community and non-profits
- ✧ ensuring the voice of the neighborhood is represented

There is no single model for starting a neighborhood association. The basic ingredients — issues, people, leadership, planning process, and structure — are necessary components. How they are put together will vary from neighborhood to neighborhood. This guide serves as a tool to assist you in the organizing process.

All the best,
City of Bellevue Neighborhood Outreach Staff

Mike *Carol* *Barb*
Julie *Ying*



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ORGANIZING A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

"Plan for the future, because that is where you are going to spend the rest of your life." **Mark Twain**

Why start a neighborhood association?



No one knows our neighborhoods better than the people who live there. Within the structure of a neighborhood association, the people in the neighborhood work together to decide their priorities, what needs to be done and what they would like to make their neighborhood better. They plan community events and activities that build up their community and provide forums for discussions about neighborhood issues. Neighborhood associations that represent the community provide an ongoing structure for people to actively participate to make a difference and improve the quality of life in their community for their families, neighbors and future generations to come.

A neighborhood association is a geographically-based organization of people who live in a neighborhood and organize around common concerns of the members. It provides a means to organize a neighborhood and manage neighborhood projects and programs. More importantly, it provides a forum to get people interested in the neighborhood, to discuss issues, disseminate information and make improvements. It provides a structure to organize volunteers and it is a recognized voice to the City and can influence decisions. It can also serve to generate funds for neighborhood improvement projects through fund raisers, dues, assessments, or donations.



Homeowners Association (HOA)

In Bellevue, some associations are formed as HOA's and then serve the dual purpose of enforcing specific rules and covenants, have mandatory dues and serve as an organizing mechanism for the neighborhood. Membership includes homeowners and renters within the defined HOA boundaries. In addition to enforcement of rules and covenants, the HOA can also provide an organized mechanism for neighborhood involvement. The City has no authority to enforce HOA covenants.

Voluntary Neighborhood Associations or Community Clubs

A voluntary neighborhood association is organized by residents and does not have the authority to force lot owners to do anything. The issues of a neighborhood association or community club are broad based, addressing residential and business concerns impacting the specific community.

Any association may include homeowners, renters, apartment dwellers, and representatives from neighborhood businesses, faith institutions, and schools interested in partnering to maintain and improve the neighborhood. Membership is voluntary and boundaries are defined by the neighborhood, though City staff can help define boundary lines that are consistent with City planning. Most of the neighborhood associations and community clubs in Bellevue fit this model.

There are about 70 organized neighborhood groups in Bellevue. To have your association registered with the City of Bellevue, you just need to fill out the one page form found on page 23 of this Guide with basic contact information for your association. This insures that your group won't miss out on any of the programs sponsored by Neighborhood Outreach, such as training classes, leadership gatherings, funding opportunities and Neighborhood News.

How to get started

Neighborhood Associations:

- ✧ Are an organized way to meet neighborhood goals and allow broad participation
- ✧ Unify the voice of the community (A collective voice is a stronger voice.).
- ✧ Provide an effective communication link with City Staff and City Council.
- ✧ Serve as a tool for maintaining clean, healthy, safe neighborhoods.
- ✧ Provide a sense of security as neighbors get to know one another.
- ✧ Increases awareness of decisions that impact the neighborhood.
- ✧ Provide a communication mechanism to increase awareness of neighborhood issue
- ✧ Help bring people together through socializing and working toward neighborhood improvement goals.

Talk to other neighbors to determine interest in starting a neighborhood association. You will find that there are many people who share your concern of building and maintaining a safe and healthy neighborhood. Most people would love an opportunity to talk about the issues they see in their neighborhood. Finding a "core group" who are interested in leading an effort to organize is the first step toward forming a successful neighborhood association.

ORGANIZING A CORE GROUP MEETING

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.” **Henry Ford**

It is as simple as neighbors working together. Oftentimes, this begins with a small core group of neighbors with a common desire to invest in their neighborhood. There might be a shared concern that has sparked the need to organize, such as improving neighborhood safety or ensuring a community voice for neighborhood planning. An association that begins informally with just a few people may gradually evolve into an organized group with common interests.

Hold an initial organizing meeting

To get started, you need a core group of committed neighbors to form the association. The number of people needed will depend on the size of the area you want to organize. The core group may start with neighbors who have not been part of an organized group before or from block watch members who have an interest in expanding their neighborhood goals. Neighbors who have an interest and are excited about the process make up your core group.

When you have a commitment from five to ten people, set up a meeting at a comfortable place, such as someone’s home, and discuss your goals and plan of action. Explain to the potential committee members what you have in mind and what you want them to do. With this group, decide on issues that are most pressing, most extensive and the most easily solved. Discuss the need for a structured association to deal with short term concerns and long term goals. Also, talk about how to get other people involved. Set a date to meet and plan your next steps for organizing the association.

This is the beginning and core of your neighborhood association.

Core group meetings

- ✧ Define the purpose of the meeting.
- ✧ Develop an agenda in cooperation with key participants.
- ✧ Choose a location suitable to your group’s size. If possible, arrange the room so that members face each other, for example, a circle or semi-circle. For large groups, try U-shaped rows.
- ✧ Choose an appropriate meeting time.
- ✧ Distribute the agenda and circulate background material, lengthy documents or articles prior to the meeting.



- ✧ Remember, members have other commitments. They will be more likely to attend meetings if you make them productive, predictable and short.
- ✧ Use visual aids for interest (posters, diagrams, etc.). It may be handy to have a map of your neighborhood area as a reference.
- ✧ When you conclude, always make sure everyone knows where and when the next meeting will be held.

During the meeting

- ✧ Welcome members and thank them for coming. Remember, they are also volunteers sharing their time and effort to invest in their neighborhood as well. Light refreshments can help to create an atmosphere of hospitality.
- ✧ Use nametags to help people learn each other's names.
- ✧ Have a sign-in sheet. This can be used to create an email distribution list or easy way for participants to know how to contact each other.
- ✧ Keep minutes of the meeting. These are especially important for members who were unable to attend and as an important reference to track input and decisions made by the group.
- ✧ Start on time. End on time.
- ✧ Review the goals and set priorities for the meeting.
- ✧ At your planning meeting discuss with the group your ideas for starting a neighborhood association. Allow time for all the neighbors at this meeting to share their thoughts.
- ✧ Be prepared to listen well. The best group discussions recognize all points of view and ideas.
- ✧ Encourage feedback. Ideas, activities and commitment to the organization improve when the decisions made reflect the contributions of the entire group.
- ✧ Keep conversation focused on the topic. Feel free to ask for only constructive and non-repetitive comments. Tactfully end discussions when they are getting nowhere or becoming destructive or unproductive.
- ✧ The leader of this group should be a good facilitator. The leader should not feel the need to have all the answers or take on all the responsibilities for the group. Allow for the members of the group to share responsibilities, roles, and critical input as desired.
- ✧ Summarize agreements reached and end the meeting with clarity on decisions reached.
- ✧ Delegate responsibilities to as many core group members as possible – as many hands make light work – and sharing the work will make it more sustainable over time.
- ✧ Decide on the meeting location, date and time, of the next core group meeting.
- ✧ Thank everyone for coming. Remember, you are in this together!

After the meeting

- ✧ The note taker should write up and distribute meeting notes/minutes within a few days. Be sure to highlight action items and who was assigned them.
- ✧ Keep lines of communication open among the core group and effectively communicate the plans, goals, and activities to the neighborhood via newsletter, flyers, e-mail, or a phone tree.
- ✧ Evaluate how to improve upon your meetings. Did the meeting space work well? Did everyone feel welcome? Was it productive? Was everyone able to contribute? Is there a clear strategy on next steps? Was it fun?
- ✧ Check in with members who have taken on a new responsibility. Do they need help? What resources might help them to succeed? Let them know that they are not alone in the work.
- ✧ Put any unfinished business on the agenda for the next meeting.
- ✧ Identify ways to celebrate the progress being made. It is good to be in a community with other people who share common goals to invest in their neighborhood and make it a better place to live.



PLANNING THE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." **African Proverb**

A well-run meeting is the beginning of a successful neighborhood association.

- ✧ Plan a strategy for getting people to come to the first meeting.
- ✧ Plan how to present the issues as the core group sees them.
- ✧ Explain why you see the need to organize a neighborhood association.
- ✧ Explain what you hope the association will accomplish.

Finding a place to hold the meeting

Try to estimate the number of people you expect at your first general meeting and then look for a meeting space to fit that number. It is important to keep the meeting place as neutral as possible for all of the attendees expected. Possible sites include:

- ✧ Schools, both public and private
- ✧ Faith Institutions
- ✧ Private homes
- ✧ Community centers
- ✧ City Hall
- ✧ Non-profit organization centers



When arranging for a meeting space, ask if there is a cost associated with the use of the facility. Schools and colleges sometimes charge a fee for use. Be sure that your meeting space can accommodate people with disabilities. If your neighborhood is racially and ethnically diverse, consider translators for potential attendees. Sometimes a member of the neighborhood can help with this.

Publicize your meeting

The best-planned meeting can be successful only if it is well attended. The way to get people to attend your meeting is to publicize. Remember to include all pertinent information in your publicity. Be sure to answer the questions of who, what, when, where and why. If possible, include a phone number or email address for people who have questions about the meeting or can't attend and want to join your distribution list so they can be notified of future meetings.

- ✧ Sign boards on key streets are a good way to point people to your meeting.
- ✧ Flyers posted on bulletin boards or windows in nearby businesses, coffee shops.

- ✧ Distribution of flyers through local school or PTSA.
- ✧ Flyer drop on doorsteps, or neighbor to neighbor doorbelling.
- ✧ Mailer (City can provide mailing labels).
- ✧ News Release to the Bellevue Reporter announcing your meeting.
- ✧ Social Media Tools, such as Facebook, NextDoor, etc.

The meeting agenda

The most important aspect of running a meeting is having a solid, well-planned agenda. An agenda should list the topics and the order in which they are to be discussed by the group. Decide at the planning meeting who will draft and reproduce the agenda. Your agenda might include the following items:

- ✧ Introductions
- ✧ Clearly state the purpose of the meeting. It is important that you explain why you are interested in forming a neighborhood association to the attendees. In the long-term, creating a mission statement for the association and even for individual committees can be helpful.
- ✧ Address areas of concern or importance to the members of the core group. This will provide a staging area for discussion by all of the residents in attendance.
- ✧ Set aside ample time for socializing. Generally, this would be held at the beginning of the meeting, and often continues at the end. You might prepare an “ice-breaker” exercise to help the attendees mix more freely.

Staging your meeting

The first meeting will be one of the most important meetings for your new group. This may be the first general meeting of neighbors. The original planning meetings were only stepping-stones. Now is the time for your hard work to become reality. Create a checklist to ensure that you have the meeting “tools”:

- ✧ Sign in sheet to collect the names, addresses and emails of those in attendance.
- ✧ Comment Card that asks for interests and involvement. (Sample)
- ✧ Copies of the meeting agenda/program
- ✧ Handouts
- ✧ Area map
- ✧ Contact information for core group and for city liaison

5 key elements for successful neighborhood meetings

Successful Neighborhood Association meetings typically have five key elements:

1. **An atmosphere of hospitality**
2. **Clear communication and facilitation**
3. **A feature program or presentation(s)**
4. **Time for resident input**
5. **Clarity on next steps**

1. An atmosphere of hospitality. Small things make a difference. A little preparation helps communicate that this neighborhood association is an inviting place – and has a clear purpose to build community and make a difference for the neighborhood.

- ✧ Have good signage to help people find the meeting
- ✧ Have someone welcome people as they arrive
- ✧ Have a table with some basic information (nametags, meeting agenda, sign-in sheets, comment cards and informational fliers)
- ✧ Refreshments help create a welcoming atmosphere. (Coffee, tea, water, cookies)



Side note: The best part of neighborhood meetings are often the conversations that happen before and/or after the meeting itself. Don't allow the details of the event to get in the way of 'making room' to receive and welcome people to the meeting. Creating an atmosphere of hospitality depends more on the ability to receive people well than it does on the coffee being made.

2. Clear communication and facilitation. Neighborhood meetings succeed when there is good facilitation. A good facilitator will make sure everyone has a chance to participate and feels comfortable.

3. Featured Program or Presentation(s). Having a presentation is a great way to provide current information about a topic of neighborhood interest. This is typically discovered by simply asking, "what are neighbors interested in?" or "what would help to improve our neighborhood?" See neighborhood workshops on page 26-27 for program ideas. Some other examples might include:

- ✧ neighborhood safety
- ✧ emergency preparedness
- ✧ community building events
- ✧ neighborhood improvement projects
- ✧ park updates
- ✧ transportation and pedestrian safety

- ✧ growth and development
- ✧ liaison updates from the City about a specific project/and or program
- ✧ inspirational speaker your neighbors would be interested in hearing.

With advance notice, City Council or City Staff will often be willing to come and share around a particular topic of interest. As a rule of thumb, presentations can often communicate a great deal of information within 15 – 30 minutes.

4. Time for Resident Input. Neighborhood meetings should always provide time to receive the input from those who have attended. This can happen in a variety of ways, including time for Q&A, facilitated large group discussions, small group table discussions, and/or comment cards. It is important to document the input that is generated – as it will shape future planning efforts.

Some questions for your group to discuss:

- ✧ **Neighborhood Boundaries:** Usually the area is bounded by strong barriers such as major roads, water, railroad tracks, open space/parks, or a major change in land use such as a change from residential to industrial. There are similar housing styles, people use common schools and shopping areas. There are common goals, issues and interests.

Contact the Neighborhood Outreach office at 425-452-6836 for help in determining neighborhood boundaries and to get maps. Some developments are very easy to define and some have the option of starting with a small area and enlarging boundaries as interest in the association grows.

- ✧ What are the top five neighborhood issues and/or topics neighbors are interested in for future meetings?
- ✧ What other things do you want the neighborhood association to accomplish?

5. Clarity on Next Steps. Neighborhood Meetings should end with answering the question, **“What’s next?”** People are naturally interested in knowing what will be done with the input gathered or when is the next Neighborhood meeting? Are there planning committees meeting in between Neighborhood meetings? Will there be meeting minutes sent out to those who attended? What type of follow up can be expected?

If there are specific issues raised, come up with an action plan for them. This may include planning a speaker or program around them, or referring the issue to a smaller group to research and report back.

EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

The way that meetings are run will affect how members become involved and stay involved in the association. If meetings rarely start on time or are dominated by a few people, members will become frustrated. When meetings are well run and the agenda is followed, members will be more willing to participate in other activities of the association. Here are some guidelines to keep your meetings on track:

Set an agenda

- ✧ Let the people attending the meeting know what they need to bring to the meeting and what you want to accomplish.
- ✧ Ask members beforehand what they want to have discussed during the meeting. This will make them feel more involved and committed.
- ✧ Before you finalize the agenda, ask yourself some questions: What is the current situation? What result is needed? What decisions should come out of the meeting? If you can agree upon goals before the meeting, sidetracking and peripheral discussion will be kept to a minimum, the group will stay focused, and you will be better able to control the flow of discussion.



Managing the meeting

- ✧ Start the meeting on time! Don't penalize those who arrived on time by making them wait for late-comers. Go ahead and start the meeting with less important agenda items. By doing this, you will reinforce the behavior of those who arrive on time without excluding those who are late.
- ✧ It's important to create a climate in which all opinions are valid and valued. Many people are too quiet or shy to speak up even though they sometimes have a very good point to make or issue to bring up. Gently encourage those people to be involved or share their opinions or ideas.
- ✧ A good way to get everyone involved is to poll all members present. This forces the silent members to provide their input.
- ✧ On the flip side, there are those members who dominate the meeting. When they overpower by being aggressive or violating other people's rights, they are most likely insecure or need attention. The best way to handle this is to demonstrate control and assertiveness. Do not ignore them or give them negative feedback which will only lead to further problems.
- ✧ Instead, confront the problem. To calm this person make direct eye contact with them and turn your body toward them so that they know that you are listening. If they know that you are paying attention to them they won't have to resort to negative approaches to get your attention.

Closure

- ✧ Try and make sure that when everyone leaves the meeting they feel as if something has been accomplished. They should end with a plan of action. Be sure that agenda items were specific enough that everyone knows what is going on and what was decided. At the end of the meeting give a brief overview of action items and assignments and answer people's questions.
- ✧ It is a best practice to send out meeting minutes to everyone who attended and provided an email address.

Resources

Board and committee chairpersons might want to get some training in running effective meetings, in using parliamentary procedure, and in consensus based decision making.

Robert's Rules of Order is a popular guide for running meetings, using the parliamentary procedure method.
<http://www.robertsrules.org/rulesintro.htm>

Running effective meetings: <http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/RunningMeetings.htm>

"Breaking Robert's Rules, The New Way to Run your Meeting, Build Consensus, and Get Results" by Lawrence E. Susskind, Jeffrey L. Cruickshank.



CHOOSING YOUR OFFICERS

"Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him, and to let him know that you trust him." **Booker T. Washington**

The key to a successful association is the selection of the officers and board members. The officers may be members of the core group who initiated efforts for beginning the association, or other members of the neighborhood. Officers are typically board members as well, but your board should also include at large members. In choosing each of your officers, you may want to consider the following characteristics:

- ✧ Does this person have the respect of the neighbors?
- ✧ Does this person have a sense of the community?
- ✧ Does this person inspire confidence?
- ✧ Does this person have the ability to relate both to the group and on an individual basis?
- ✧ Does this person have an understanding of the group process, and the leader's role in this process?
- ✧ Does this person seem to have a feel for the democratic process? (No one wants a dictator!)
- ✧ Does this person have the ability to listen?
- ✧ Does this person have the ability to articulate the group's desires and positions?
- ✧ Is this person logical, reasonable, self-motivated, and have the ability to motivate others?

And most important – are they passionate, and do they have time to lead the group!

An important and often overlooked aspect of organizing is considering the attributes you DO NOT want in your association officers:

- ✧ An officer should not be a "know-it-all" dictator.
- ✧ An officer should not be serving on the board in a position of power due to personal dysfunctional behavior.
- ✧ An officer should not be a rude or obnoxious person, who regularly demonstrates this behavior in the meetings.

Board of directors

It is important for your neighborhood association to be as inclusive as possible. Therefore, any person who is a property owner or renter within the neighborhood association boundaries, or who meets the criteria as set forth in your association's by-laws, is a prospective member and should be able to participate in your association.



Elections should be held annually for your neighborhood association to select a Board of Directors. The board will handle the business of the neighborhood association throughout the upcoming year. Your association's bylaws should specify the positions and the general framework of your electoral process. The "job" descriptions outline the responsibilities of the board and other individual officer positions. In addition to the roles listed below, board members may be selected at large to represent the general membership. The number of board members can vary, based on how many people are interested in serving. Other roles and descriptions may be added based on the needs of your neighborhood.

President

- ✧ Oversees the schedule of meetings and activities.
- ✧ Coordinates the activities of officers, leaders, and committees.
- ✧ Appoints committees as needed. The President is an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee.
- ✧ Represents the association in a public capacity
- ✧ Arranges for a regular meeting time and place each month.
- ✧ Reviews tasks and makes assignments.
- ✧ Develops meeting agenda.
- ✧ Exhibits good leadership qualities and is a role model to the members of the association.

Vice President*

- ✧ Assists the President.
- ✧ Presides at meetings and performs other duties in the absence of the President.

*Some associations may find it effective to have multiple Vice Presidents with specific portfolios, such as V.P. Membership and Recruitment, V.P. Marketing and Communications, V.P. Programs

Secretary

- ✧ Keeps complete and accurate minutes of all meetings.
- ✧ Maintains correspondence.
- ✧ Maintains membership records.
- ✧ Contacts members who have missed several meetings and extends an invitation for them to attend the next meeting.

Treasurer

- ✧ Makes bank deposits.
- ✧ Keeps records of receipts and expenditures of association funds.
- ✧ Plans a budget and presents to the association for approval.
- ✧ Pays bills and signs checks.
- ✧ Gives a financial report at meetings.

Possible Committee Structure

Each individual association will find the need for different committees, some that are ongoing and some that may be issue and time specific. Some possible committees include:

Crime and Safety, Communications, Liaison to City of Bellevue, Hospitality/Social, Parks and Open Space, Traffic and Transportation, Membership Recruitment, Programs, etc.



RECRUITING & MAINTAINING MEMBERS

"To most of you, your neighbor is a stranger...you can't be a stranger to any guy who is on your team."

John Willoughby

Recruiting new members to the group can be a challenge, but it is only half the battle. The other half is keeping them involved in your organization. For every member who is active in the association, there are probably two who would be involved if they were properly motivated and invited. Keeping the interest and involvement of neighbors in their association is a continual challenge faced by every neighborhood group.

The following are ideas to keep in mind as you recruit new members.

- ✧ Always welcome new people and attempt to make them feel at ease with the group. Officers and board members should watch for new faces at each meeting and welcome them enthusiastically. Each new or potential member should be introduced to someone who lives near them or shares a similar interest. Designate an official "greeter" at every meeting or program.
- ✧ Encourage new ideas and input in all levels of the organization. People coming into a situation for the first time are able to see things in a new light and can offer new solutions to old problems. They just might have the answer that you have been seeking. New perspectives can assist the whole group in problem solving.
- ✧ After someone comes to their first meeting, have a board member invite them out to coffee and get to know them and help them get to know the association.
- ✧ Help new members find a place in the association. Not everyone is a self-starter. Many will offer to help but have no idea where to begin. Develop a list of small volunteer activities that includes a job description and approximate time commitment for each task. This will be a great start for your new members.
- ✧ Avoid the appearance of cliques. New members who see the same people running every project will feel excluded and may not return. Appoint people who are not part of the core group to positions of leadership. Sensitivity to this issue is central to creating a sense of belonging among group members.
- ✧ Maintain current membership records. Keep a file that lists members' names, addresses, phone numbers, family member names, occupations, special talents, concerns, areas of interest, etc.
- ✧ Enjoy yourself and have fun. The work of the neighborhood association should be rewarding. Sponsor parties and celebrations to get to know your neighbors better. Have events that appeal to all, including children. This will foster a strong sense of community spirit among your neighbors.



Tips for maintaining interest

Be realistic in your expectation of the members. Neighbors have to work and have other priorities that may limit their participation. Remember that some people are leaders and some are participants.

- ✧ Stay focused on a few well-defined goals or projects. Too many projects may frustrate or dilute your volunteer resources.
- ✧ Be sure to set attainable and realistic goals, which include a time line and identify individual and/or committee responsibilities.
- ✧ Celebrate your successes, even if it means doing it one step at a time.
- ✧ Be sure to publicly recognize members for their efforts and accomplishments. Recognize efforts in your newsletter, blog, or website.
- ✧ Try to incorporate “fun” into your meetings or projects. Humor helps too!
- ✧ Ask specific neighbors for help or their involvement. Sometimes all it takes is asking a neighbor to do something. They may be willing if asked, but may not volunteer or speak up when an “all call” for help is issued.
- ✧ Find out what is important to your member(s) and try to get them involved in committees or projects involving their interest.
- ✧ Delegate important tasks and assignments.
- ✧ Ask neighbors what their concerns are and respond quickly to those issues when and if possible.
- ✧ Create a buddy system or “neighbor mentor” to make newcomers feel more welcome and important to the association.
- ✧ Have the president or another board member personally meet with new members to encourage their involvement.
- ✧ Ask neighbors to share what they do for a living. So often neighbors have no idea what each does for a living. Promote using the businesses and services of neighbors with no perks attached or expected discounts for services, etc.
- ✧ Publish a newsletter, web page or blog to keep the neighborhood informed and focused. Include a classified section for neighbors to promote their businesses or sell items.
- ✧ Meetings are not the only way to bring neighbors together. Organize a social function by delegating the event to a special committee.
- ✧ Sponsor clean-up days, if possible.
- ✧ Involve the youth in the neighborhood in activities and events. Many times, kids are able to get their parents involved in the association.
- ✧ Provide useful and meaningful information at your meeting. Contact your City of Bellevue liaison (see Appendix A) for information on City services useful to your neighborhood and neighborhood workshop programs.

- ✧ The president and/or board should delegate authority and be supportive. Let the committees do their jobs. Respect their decisions.
- ✧ Create a communication system that makes it possible for the association to keep its members informed.
- ✧ Appreciate your volunteers. Recognize and thank a specific person or persons at a general meeting; acknowledge someone's efforts in your newsletter. Incentives and rewards do not have to cost a lot. Use your imagination and creativity.



SETTING GOALS

"The indispensable first step to getting what you want in life is this: decide what you want."

Ben Stein

A unifying vision or purpose for your neighborhood provides direction for setting goals that will make the vision a reality. Determine the needs of your neighborhood through meetings and personal discussions with neighbors. After you construct a list of possible needs, discuss them in reasonable depth to identify the issues. When you have identified the issues, discuss each one and agree on the priority of each issue. Sort the issues into short-term or long-term projects and begin to evaluate how your association would like to approach each issue.



In developing your neighborhood projects, focus on a specific issue that will demonstrate action and results and that will be visible in the neighborhood. Get the whole community behind the project by promoting the issue as much as possible. This will provide lots of participation for you to establish a large membership base. If you are successful in achieving your goals or effecting change on a single issue, it demonstrates that your association is an effective group. This establishes the credibility and worthiness of your association, characteristics which are important to long-term survival. Unfortunately, one problem with concentrating on a

single issue is that when that problem is solved, everyone leaves. The motivation for continued participation is often lost when the issue is "solved".

Therefore, it is important to introduce other issues at the same time and get people to work on them in addition to the main issue. As each issue is resolved, focus on new, short- and long-term projects.

Evaluate the association's progress to recognize successes, detect problems and suggest improvements. In planning projects, keep momentum with a list of projects and activities that will maintain participation and interest. The best approach is to plan around a calendar. Do not suffocate your members with more projects than time will allow. Choose a pace and stay consistent. Be careful how you plan and coordinate all projects. Keep people involved in all levels and give people specific jobs (with specific time frames) to do. Everyone is willing to contribute a little bit of time. Do not give too much responsibility to one person when it can be easily delegated to several.

Finally, celebrate your accomplishments!

BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

"There is one thing better than good government, and that is government in which all people have a part."

Walter Hines Page



Social Capital is the “glue” that holds a neighborhood together. It works in the in-between spaces bringing people and resources together. Social Capital is the web of relationships giving a neighborhood a sense of community and belonging. Every neighborhood has Social Capital. Most neighborhoods have more Social Capital than they think they do.

On the following page are some examples of actions, both large and small, that we can take every day to build Social Capital in our neighborhoods. Read the list and add some of your own!

1. Go for a walk, invite a neighbor.
2. Invite friends to take a hike, go snowshoeing, or cross-country skiing.
3. Be real, be humble, acknowledge others.
4. Write personal notes when inspired to neighbors and friends.
5. Form a fitness/health group with your neighbors.
6. Organize a neighborhood yard sale.
7. Visit a local nursing home, day care center, or group home.
8. Start a children’s story hour at your local library.
9. Slow down enough to chat with your neighbors as take your trash to the street or get your mail.
10. Volunteer to deliver Meals-on-Wheels in your neighborhood.
11. Become a story-reader or baby-rocker at your neighborhood pre-school or childcare.
12. Read your local newspaper.
13. Join a neighborhood book club.
14. Raise funds for a neighborhood project.
15. Build a neighborhood playground.
16. Assist with or create your neighborhood newsletter.
17. Join other people walking in the mall in early morning – and don’t forget to stay for coffee.
18. Organize a neighborhood litter pick-up.
19. Invite your neighbors to help with a home renovation/building project for someone in need.
20. Help the kids on your street construct a lemonade stand.
21. Bake some cookies and bring to a new neighbor with a list of important community phone numbers.
22. Attend your neighborhood meeting.
23. Register to vote and be educated on local issues.

24. Support your local merchants.
25. Volunteer in your child's classroom or chaperone a field trip.
26. Organize or participate in a neighborhood sports league.
27. Join a local gardening club.
28. Attend home parties when invited.
29. Organize a local blood drive.
30. Attend children's athletic contests, plays, and recitals.
31. Get to know your children's teachers.
32. Start a monthly afternoon tea group.
33. Speak at or host a monthly brown bag lunch series.
34. Get to know the clerks and salespeople at your local stores.
35. Attend PTA meeting.
36. Organize a community garden.
37. Join a carpool.
38. Surprise a new neighbor with one of your favorite dinners – and include the recipe.
39. Give to your local food bank.
40. Attend the play put on by your local High School.
41. Attend Veteran's Day and Memorial Day parades and say, "Thank You".
42. Form a neighborhood outdoor activity group.
43. Help coach Little League or other youth sports – even if you don't have a child playing.
44. Help run the snack bar at the Little League Field.
45. Form a "tools cooperative" with your neighbors – to share ladders, rototillers, etc.
46. Join a baby-sitting cooperative.
47. Offer to rake a neighbor's yard or shovel their walk if he or she needs help.
48. Plan a "Walking Tour" of historic areas in your neighborhood.
49. Eat breakfast out on the weekend at a local gathering spot.
50. Host a "Block Party" or a holiday open house.
51. Start a "fix it" group – friends who are willing to help clean, paint, garden, etc., and you help them in turn.
52. Offer to serve on a neighborhood committee.
53. Ask the person at the next table if he or she would like to share your table for lunch.
54. Organize a social gathering to welcome a new neighbor.
55. Persuade your local restaurant to have a designated "meet people" table.
56. Host a potluck supper before your neighborhood meeting.
57. Give a weatherproof chess or checkers board to your neighborhood park.
58. Gather a group to clean up a local park or cemetery.
59. Play cards with your neighbors.
60. Have a neighborhood barbecue.
61. Talk to your friends and family about social capital. Tell them why it matters.

“BETTER TOGETHER”

Resources and Tools for Bellevue Neighborhoods

(For current dates of events/trainings, visit the Neighborhood Outreach webpage at <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/neighborhood-outreach.htm>)

Neighborhood Liaison Program: Each neighborhood has a Neighborhood Outreach staff person who serves as your neighborhood liaison. Your liaison is your personal resource to help you navigate the City and is your partner to troubleshoot any individual or neighborhood issues.

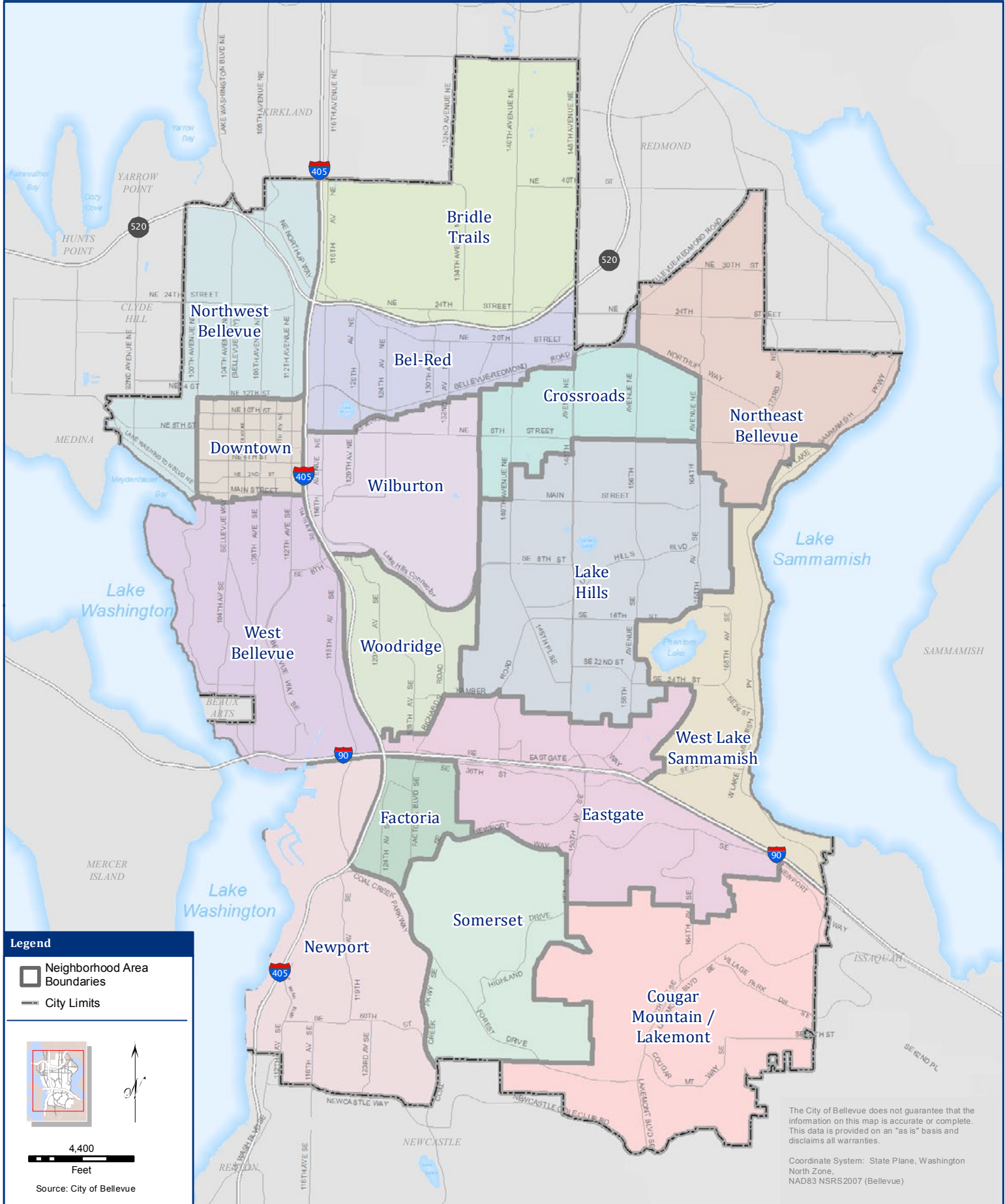
Neighborhoods that are starting or re-launching an association can receive customized assistance from City staff and may also be eligible for City funds for an initial mailing to residents to promote a kick-off meeting. For more information, contact your neighborhood liaison.

- ✧ **Bridle Trails, Bel-Red, Northwest Bellevue, Northeast Bellevue, West Bellevue:**
Mike McCormick Huentelman, 425-452-4089, mmhuent@bellevuewa.gov
- ✧ **Factoria, Eastgate, Cougar Mountain/Lakemont, West Lake Sammamish:**
Carol Ross, 425-452-7917, cross@bellevuewa.gov
- ✧ **Downtown Bellevue, Wilburton, Woodridge and Lake Hills:**
Julie Ellenhorn, 425-452-5372, jellenhorn@bellevuewa.gov
- ✧ **Somerset, Newport:**
Ying Carlson, 425-452-4342, ycarlson@bellevuewa.gov
- ✧ **Crossroads:**
Barb Tuininga, 425-452-2800, btuininga@bellevuewa.gov

To identify your neighborhood liaison, see the neighborhood area map on page 22.



Neighborhood Areas





Better Together

Neighborhood Association/Community Club Registration Form



Club or Association Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Association Boundaries:

North _____ South _____

East _____ West _____

Name and email of primary contact(s) for communications*

Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____

**This is the person(s) who you would like all city correspondence, newsletters, neighborhood program information, etc. to be sent to for dissemination to the neighborhood. It does not have to be the President.*

If you have officers, please list the current President and Officers:

President _____ Email _____ Phone _____

Vice President _____ Email _____ Phone _____

Secretary _____ Email _____ Phone _____

Treasurer _____ Email _____ Phone _____

What month do your officers change?

☐ Jan ☐ Feb ☐ Mar ☐ Apr ☐ May ☐ Jun ☐ Jul ☐ Aug ☐ Sept ☐ Oct ☐ Nov ☐ Dec

What is your association meeting schedule? (frequency and dates if available)

What is average attendance at your membership meetings? _____

Would your association be interested in scheduling speakers for the City for future meetings? ☐ Yes ☐ No

List topics of interest: _____

Does your association have: ☐ Newsletter ☐ Website ☐ Blog ☐ Next Door site ☐ Other _____

Neighborhood Leadership Gatherings: These events invite neighborhood association officers and emerging leaders to gather at City Hall to learn about key city initiatives, to share best practices and to identify common themes for neighborhoods. The information collected at these events serves as a base for staff liaisons to build relationships with neighborhoods and to address individual neighborhood concerns such as crime, communication methods and diversity issues. Gatherings are held in February and September.



Building and Sustaining a Vibrant Neighborhood Association:

This two part workshop is offered for newly ramping up or revitalizing neighborhood association leadership. Topics covered include drawing people in to your association, vision for your association, coaching on individual association needs for board leadership, membership recruitment, roles and responsibilities and identifying neighborhood issues. Class will also focus on leadership styles and effective meetings, as well as building community, neighborhood improvement

and advocacy. We will conclude with a walk through of tools available for neighborhoods and the chance to be paired with a neighborhood association mentor.

Workshops will be led by Outreach staff and current and past neighborhood association leadership. At the conclusion of the program, neighborhoods will be paired with a neighborhood mentor and a city liaison to insure future success. To participate, a minimum of two neighborhood representatives must attend together. Check the Neighborhood Outreach website for the next available training.



Bellevue Essentials: An 8 week interactive leadership class designed to provide an overview of the inner workings of city government and an on-ramp for emerging leaders who may want to step into broader public service at the neighborhood or city level. Class is limited to 30 individuals and meets weekly on Thursday evenings, beginning September 18, 2014. Applications are available for the 2014-15 class in May, 2014.

What is Bellevue Essentials?

Bellevue Essentials provides an entry point for emerging community leaders, especially those who are new to public service. The program features 8 weekly evening sessions and a Saturday tour day. Participants will be exposed to the structure and inner workings of City government in many arenas. As part of a diverse learning community, class members will create relationships and will build familiarity with government process and decision making. Upon completion, participants will really know the “nuts and bolts” of Bellevue.

What will participants learn?

Sessions are led by key City staff and Board, Commission and Council leadership. A variety of learning tools, including speakers, panels, interactive exercises and site visits are used to create an interesting and dynamic program. Participants will have opportunities to meet with current neighborhood leaders, decision makers, elected officials and community leaders.

Who can apply?

Bellevue Essentials is open to anyone who lives or works in Bellevue. No prior leadership experience is necessary, and attendance is required at a minimum of 80% of the class sessions.

Class size is limited to 30 participants who will be selected with the goal of creating a class makeup that is broadly representative of Bellevue's neighborhoods and its diverse population. Applicants who are Bellevue residents will receive priority.

Questions?

Contact program coordinator, Julie Ellenhorn, Neighborhood Outreach, City of Bellevue, 425-452-5372 or jellenhorn@bellevuewa.gov with questions or to receive a brochure and simple one page application.

Applications are due by July 15 and participants will be notified of acceptance by August 5, 2014.

Schedule:

Classes are held on Thursday evenings at City Hall. Dinner and networking begin at 5:30 p.m. with class beginning promptly at 6 p.m.. Class ends at 8:30 or 9 p.m. There is one Saturday session on September 27 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., which meets at Crossroads Community Center Center.

For graduation, attendance is required at a minimum of 80% of class sessions.

September 18	Bellevue Demographics and Trends
September 25	Public Process/Boards and Commissions
September 27	Exploring Parks, Arts and Neighborhoods
October 2	Economic Development Human Services
October 9	Planning & Community Development Development Services
October 16	Utilities Environmental Stewardship
October 23	Finance and Budget Transportation and Traffic
October 30	Protecting Our Community/Fire and Police
November 6	Graduation



Neighborhood Workshops: 1-2 hour programs are available for neighborhood association meetings. A full list of workshops is below.

Building Your Neighborhood Association

This workshop is made-to-order for your neighborhood association. Whether you are just starting out, are long established and need re-vitalization and re-organization, or just need some assistance with governance, mentoring leaders or increasing membership and involvement, Neighborhood Outreach staff will work with your group to tailor a training(s) to meet your specific needs. We can help you recharge and determine next steps to ensure your neighborhood association is strong.

90-120 minutes, minimum 5 participants

The Changing Face of Bellevue

Diversity is growing in Bellevue, with the 2010 census measuring 41% minority population in Bellevue. Grab some popcorn and view the City of Bellevue's 8 minute video "The Diversity Advantage" with your neighbors, followed by small group discussions on diversity in your own neighborhood. What are the challenges and opportunities that being a diverse community present? How can neighbors effectively communicate and learn from each other in a multi-cultural world? How can neighbors overcome language and cultural barriers? What can we learn about the messages we send and how can we understand cultural cues and norms?

45-60 minutes, ideal for groups of 10+

Forming our Future

Learn interesting facts about the Bellevue community, environment, and the local economy-- then add your group's ideas to help shape Bellevue's future. A discussion guide containing questions about your vision for the future of Bellevue can be staff or self-guided. Comments received before fall 2014 will be included in the City's Comprehensive Plan update.

45-60 minutes, 10 to 15 participants

Addressing Neighborhood Traffic Safety Concerns

Are you annoyed by cars speeding down your block? Have you ever wanted to put up a “Children at Play” sign to tell drivers that your neighborhood is filled with young children playing in their yards? Traffic and parking issues on residential streets can greatly affect your sense of community and personal well-being. Neighborhood Traffic Safety Services works with residents to help protect and preserve neighborhood livability by utilizing education, enforcement, and engineering. These efforts help to minimize cut-through traffic, discourage excessive vehicle speeds, encourage safe walking and biking practices, and reduce overflow parking. Learn how you and your neighbors can become actively engaged in this process and look at the available tools for addressing your concerns.

30 minutes, minimum 10 participants

Life of a Transportation Capital Investment Plan (CIP) Project

Have you ever wondered how those roadway projects become reality? Join the journey of the “Life of a Transportation Project”—from idea to actual construction, with all stops in between. For example, building a sidewalk is more than just concrete. Residents will learn about the many codes, standards, public outreach, and other technical aspects that all transportation projects must comply with before a project breaks ground.

60 minutes, minimum 10 participants

Handling a Difficult Conversation with Neighbors

Got a conflict with your neighbor? Need some coaching to communicate with your neighbor about trees, views, parking, noise, fences? Interested in approaching your neighbor to find a mutually agreeable solution before a problem escalates? Do you need to feel heard by your neighbor and want an opportunity for skill building? The Bellevue Neighborhood Mediation program provides these services and has a high success rate of bringing neighbors to resolution. In this participatory workshop you will learn tools to improve your people skills and enhance your neighbor to neighbor relationships.

60-120 minutes, minimum 10 participants

Resolving Group Conflicts (Before They Divide Your Community)

Some neighborhood disputes affect many households -- what to do about properties that aren't maintained or whether to revive a dormant homeowner's association. When neighborhood factions form, these controversies can divide formerly content communities. But they don't have to... your neighborhood can address these controversies so that everyone has input and the decision is seen as fair. Learn how to: bring people to the table; insure accurate information; keep everyone informed; identify common goals; and use consensus decision making. A positive process will make your neighborhood a safer and happier place.

60 minutes, minimum 10 participants

Actions for a Greener Future

We've all heard about the impacts of climate change at regional, national, and global scales. But what can we do here in Bellevue – in our homes and neighborhoods - to mitigate the impacts? Join your neighbors for a workshop to learn what the city is doing to reduce greenhouse emissions, discuss what activities your neighborhood can participate in, and detail your community vision of a greener future.

Workshop highlights include cutting edge practices adopted by the city that save money while reducing greenhouse gas emissions, products and practices for your daily routine that can help your household save money and reduce your impact, community resources such as rain gardens, electric vehicle infrastructure, P-patches, and recycling options that contribute to a smaller community footprint and greener neighborhoods.

60 minutes, minimum 10 participants

Ways To Survive: How To Get Prepared For An Emergency

When disasters strike in other parts of the world, it's natural to start thinking, "What if?" We can't control what emergencies might come our way, but we CAN control how we respond to them. During this presentation, we will discuss the hazards and risks that affect Bellevue, how to build preparation kits and make plans for your home and workplace, ways to get involved with your neighbors and hear an overview of emergency response team functions.

45-60 minutes, minimum 20 participants

NEIGHBORLINK **Neighbor Link:** Let our Outreach staff help you identify a service project or plan a celebration to help strengthen neighbor and community connections. For information on city support for neighborhood block parties and community building events, contact Carol Ross at 425-452-7917, cross@bellevuewa.gov.

Celebrations and Block Parties

The Neighbor Link Program which began in 2009 was designed to facilitate events in which community leaders often with an organizing community service objective, would rally, build and renew relationships with neighbors and celebrate that success. It is this goodwill that creates great community; neighbors who know one another, are involved in their community and the city at large, and make a difference to improve the quality of life and safety for all of their residents. Since the program began, Outreach has sponsored over 200 neighborhood celebrations, collected over 2,000 pounds of food, and donated hundreds-of-dollars to charity.



During the summer months, June –September, neighborhoods are encouraged to celebrate community by holding a block party or a neighborhood gathering. These celebrations organized by residents takes many forms from small to large, involving favorite summer foods, multi-ethnic potlucks, children’s games, entertainment and art projects. Community liaisons from the Police and the Fire Department join in the festivities and love to meet neighbors if scheduling allows.

Neighbor Link will provide your neighborhood with colorful flyers and banners to promote your event. Help expand neighbor participation, when you consider Neighbor Link assistance in planning a street closure with a city temporary permit (fee waived) and up to \$50 reimbursement for approved road closed barricades. For current program offerings, check the Neighborhood Outreach website.

Neighborhood Green-Clean Up

The Neighbor Link – Green-Clean Up is designed to promote large scale yard debris clean-ups of residential single family homes, surrounding lawn and sidewalk areas, with a city sponsored dumpster placed in your neighborhood for a weekend. In addition to the benefits of improved neighborhood appearance, clean-ups provide an opportunity for neighbors to get to know each other by working together towards a common goal, sharing techniques on property and landscape maintenance and better understanding city code compliance.



The program will run from June-October. A Green-Clean Up is designed by the neighborhood, with a minimum participation of 25 or more residents or 10 homes, requires an application and must meet review and safety criteria of Neighborhood Outreach and the Transportation Department. An additional component of the clean-up program with a focus on re-use and re-cycling could include assistance with signage for community organized yard sales and neighborhood coordination of donation truck pick up of reusable items.

Neighborhood Community Service

Identifying local service projects and those suggested by Outreach - Neighbor Link, neighbors work together to contribute food, cash donations and labor to community partners helping those in need.

Some examples of community service include the following:

- ✧ Jubilee Reach, August Day of Sharing and Caring, providing outside home improvements to neighbors in need
- ✧ Foodbank donations to organization such as Hopelink, Backpack Meals for Kids
- ✧ Diaper Drives
- ✧ Neighborhood charity of choice
- ✧ Donations of usable household and non-household items (cell-phones, clothing, unused toiletries, eyeglasses) to local non-profits
- ✧ Neighborhood garage sales with proceeds benefitting local non-profits
- ✧ Fundraising for communities experiencing a natural disaster
- ✧ Foodbank and cash donations to animal shelters



Neighborhood Safety

Neighborhood Block Watches

Neighborhoods often don't think about crime deterrence until hit with a rash of burglaries or car prowls. Formal association meetings or informal gatherings during the summer may provide neighborhood organizers with an opportunity to enlist support and begin the conversation around home safety.

- ✧ Determine the role of block watch in your neighborhood
- ✧ Report suspicious activities by calling 911
- ✧ Develop communication strategies and tools to alert your neighbors
- ✧ Learn how to improve your personal safety by pruning trees, conducting a lighting audit, and window/door safety check
- ✧ Participate as a neighborhood in August at National Night Out

Police Contact: Detective Richard Chinn, Bellevue Police Department, 425- 452-6915 or RChinn@bellevuewa.gov

Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness

With a foundation of Block Watch, neighborhoods may naturally make the move to organize toward Emergency Preparedness. Is your neighborhood prepared for an earthquake or some type of natural disaster? Do you know your neighbors? Do you know the skills or resources in your community? Does your neighborhood have a response plan? The goal is to move from unprepared to prepared. Obtain the tools for Mapping Your Neighborhood or sign up for CERT, Community Emergency Response Team. One way to get started is to participate in or contact someone in the newly forming City of Bellevue, Citizen Corps Council – Uniting Communities, Preparing the Nation.



Office of Emergency Management Contact: Sophia Le, 425-452-6935 or SLe@bellevuewa.gov

Cultural Learning and Celebrations

The City of Bellevue Parks and Community Services Department co-sponsors programs during the year to celebrate Bellevue's diversity and enhance the public's understanding of cultures around the world.

For example, included on the city's website is [Voice of Diversity Television Program](#), where the public can view an archive of stories that provide a colorful look at the rich cultural diversity in Bellevue. This program features segments on art in Bellevue, a Black History exhibit, Bhangra music from India and artists from Russia and Japan displaying their talent.

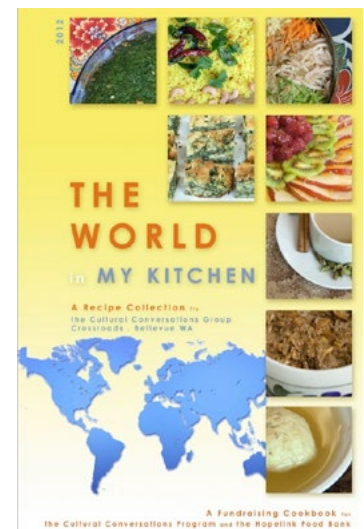
Upcoming Events and more information http://www.bellevuewa.gov/cultural_diversity.htm. or contact Kevin Henry, khenry@bellevuewa.gov



Cultural Conversations: The Cultural Conversations Program was launched in 2010 as a partnership between diverse women in the community and the City of Bellevue. It was initiated by women who had a desire to get better connected with their changing and diverse community and enhance their knowledge and understanding of different cul-

tural practices and world views. Monthly gatherings include women from all around the world. The goals for the program have centered on creating opportunity for community connection, encouraging residents to build relationships with one another and with their city government.

Storytelling is the heart of Cultural Conversations. Members see this as an opportunity to experience others' cultures and seek understanding among friends and neighbors who are from different ethnic backgrounds. The relaxed and intimate atmosphere creates a unique and safe environment for women to bond and share their experience with each other. Since the program began participants have told their stories covering universal topics nuanced by culture. Viewed from the lens of birth place, traditions across



generations, history, and world events we've covered such topics as communication across culture, techniques for having a difficult conversation, cultural assumptions and the issues that result, cultural practices surrounding birth and death, and immigrations' impact on the person leaving and being received, to name a few.

Since the program began, many connections have been made and friendships have flourished. The group has also published a cookbook providing family recipes and the traditions associated with enjoying these dishes. The City of Bellevue believes by facilitating these "cultural conversations", we build a more cohesive and involved community. Meetings are typically held the third Tuesday of the month at the Crossroads Community Center. For a schedule of events please visit <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/neighborhood-multicultural.htm>.



Three photos above by Lisa Merrill



Neighborhood Match: The Neighborhood Match Program was created in the 1990's as a response to residents who requested small local projects to improve their neighborhood. The Program provides matching grant up to \$10,000 per project for small-scale neighborhood improvements. For every dollar awarded by the City, the applying neighborhood provides an equal or greater match consisting of money, professional services, building materials, and/or volunteer labor. It is also the only neighborhood program which builds projects that is initiated by residents, and the matching funds are directly accessible by residents.

For the past 20 years, the program has funded hundreds of local improvement projects in Bellevue neighborhoods such as entry signs, art projects, small gathering spaces, landscaping projects. These projects have beautified the city and enhanced the livability of our neighborhoods. By working with neighborhood leaders and active residents, the program fosters collaborative and leadership skills and empowers neighborhoods to seek a stronger sense of community and neighborhood identity, therefore nurturing a more cohesive community where neighbors get to know one another by building a project together, and take pride in maintaining and caring for their neighborhood.

For more information, visit the program website at http://www.bellevuewa.gov/neighborhood_match_requirements.htm or contact Ying Carlson at 425-452-4342, ycarlson@bellevuewa.gov

What are Bellevue neighbors doing with the grant and what are they saying about the program?



"You can't go wrong with art, it brings people together because we can all appreciate beautiful things."
– Match project participant

"Thank you so much for the opportunity and we are already thinking about a second project in our neighborhood!"
– Match project participant



"It was so good for my kids to build this project with the neighbors!"
– Match project participant

"This little project transformed our quiet neighborhood! We really got to know everyone in the neighborhood. We hang out with each other and care for each other – it's truly amazing!"
– Match project participant



"A new neighbor said his family was house hunting in our neighborhood last fall - just so happened it was the Saturday morning we all worked to clear out the landscape in November – and he

saw us all out there working together and said, "that's where I want to live, where all the neighbors pitch in to help out". And they bought a house in the cul-de-sac.
– Match project participant





"There is this great pride in our neighborhood after the entry sign project is complete: yes, this is where we live, this is our community!"

– Match project participant

"We are lucky in Bellevue to have such a program available. I really enjoyed the process especially because at the end we had 2 beautiful signs for our neighborhood." – Match project participant



"Match (program) did work and it was a community building project, having the city MATCH funds made the project possible"

– Match project participant



INCORPORATION AND NON-PROFIT STATUS

Most of Bellevue's neighborhood associations do not apply for non-profit status, but many have become incorporated.

Applying for Non-profit Status

The benefits of non-profit status are:

- ✧ To enable your neighborhood association to accept tax-deductible donations.
- ✧ To avoid paying sales tax on your purchases.
- ✧ To avoid paying income tax on interest earned in the association's bank account and on qualified non-profit income.

A neighborhood association is eligible for non-profit status if:

- ✧ It is incorporated by the state as a non-profit corporation.
- ✧ It is organized solely for charitable purposes.
- ✧ For neighborhood associations interested in applying for official non--profit status, this link will guide you on the steps to consider when incorporating in Washington State.

<http://dor.wa.gov/docs/Pubs/IndustSpecific/NonProfit.pdf>



OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

If your neighborhood association accumulates money, you may want to open a bank account. To open an account, you must first obtain a Tax Identification Number. A tax identification number is a federal tax number that is filed with the IRS.



To receive a tax identification number:

- ✧ Apply for an EIN from the IRS

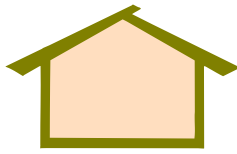
The EIN application can be found here: [http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&Self-Employed/Apply-for-an-Employer-Identification-Number-\(EIN\)-Online](http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&Self-Employed/Apply-for-an-Employer-Identification-Number-(EIN)-Online)

**Note:* There are many on-line services that offer to apply for an EIN for you for a fee. The EIN does not cost anything and can be done directly with the IRS.

Other guidelines for opening a bank account may include:

- ✧ Identification, such as a driver's license, credit card or passport, is required to open any type of account.
- ✧ Along with your tax ID number, you will need other papers providing the legitimacy of your organization.
- ✧ You must bring a copy of your bylaws or minutes of your first meeting if you are not a corporation or do not have non-profit status. You must also state the names and titles of people who can conduct business for the organization – your officers.
- ✧ If you are a non-profit corporation, you must bring the corporate resolution form, sealed by the state, proving non-profit status.
- ✧ The decision to waive service charges is at the discretion of the individual bank. If you are not a non-profit business, there is usually no waiver of service charge.
- ✧ Signature cards must be signed by the representatives of the neighborhood association, usually the Treasurer and President, along with anyone else who will be signing on the bank account, and should be updated annually.

SAMPLE MEMBERSHIP FORM



Neighborhood Association Membership Form

Annual membership donation is \$25 (per household)

Name(s)

Street address

Home phone

E-mail address

Work phone

Signature(s)

Date

I would like to help with the following projects:

_____ Neighborhood Improvement

_____ Leadership/Governance

_____ Block Watch

_____ Building Community

_____ Neighborhood Celebrations

_____ Hospitality Committee

_____ Communications/Newsletter

_____ Transportation/Safety

_____ City Liaison

_____ Development

Other: _____

SAMPLE BY-LAWS

The City does not require associations or community clubs to have specific bylaws, but your group may find them helpful as a governing document. There are many choices and forms of bylaws. Below is an example that could be adapted to your neighborhood.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION BYLAWS

Article I. – Name

The name of this organization shall be the _____ Neighborhood Association.

Article II. – Boundaries

The geographic boundaries of the _____ Neighborhood Association shall be _____ (North), _____ (South), _____ (West), _____ (East)

Article III. – Purpose and Aims

The purpose of the _____ Neighborhood Association shall be to form a voluntary coalition to support projects and programs which promote the common good of our members; to inform, educate, and provide an open forum for the free discussion of all issues which affect our neighborhood and promote cooperative action; to build a better neighborhood by reducing and preventing crime; to develop a cleaner, safer, healthier neighborhood and improve the quality of life for all its residents; to solve problems which exist or arise within our boundaries; and to enable our members to work together to determine the needs of our neighborhood and fully utilize all available resources to respond to those needs.

Article IV. – Membership

Section 1. Individual membership shall be open to any person who is at least 18 years of age who resides, owns property, or operates a business whose address is located within the boundaries described above, upon payment of the annual dues. Membership shall be open to a representative from any organization, government agency, non-profit entity, business, faith organization or school which owns property or meets within the boundaries described above. Eligibility is to be without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin.

Section 2. Annual dues are voluntary and will be \$ _____ per household or non-residential entity. These funds will be used for items such flyers, newsletters, refreshments and other materials needed by the Association. Membership dues are non-refundable.

Section 3. Each individual member shall have only one vote. Or: Each household or non-residential entity, upon payment of dues, shall have only one vote. A representative member shall have only one vote and no organization or entity shall have more than one voting representative. The representative member must have specific authority from the governing board of the entity which he/she represents. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

Section 4. Each member of the Association is eligible to serve as an officer, director, or on any committee of the Association, to vote on matters as provided by the bylaws, and to attend any business or social functions of the Association.

Section 5. It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Directors to maintain a current membership list of the Association which shall be open and available for inspection upon request from other members. This list shall be comprised of persons and entities that qualify for membership who have enrolled as members by payment of dues.

Article V – Board of Directors and Officers

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall be composed of not less than _____ or more than _____ members to be elected at a general meeting of the Association. The directors shall be elected for a _____ year term and at least one-half shall rotate off each year to be replaced or re-elected. No director shall serve more than _____ consecutive years. Those members serving on the Board at the time of these bylaws being approved shall draw lots to determine who shall serve a full two-year term or a one-year term to begin the rotation. The Board should not have two elected officers from the same household.

Section 2. Each year the general membership shall elect the following officers from its membership: (revise to suit your association needs)

- ✧ President
- ✧ Vice-President
- ✧ Secretary
- ✧ Treasurer
- ✧ Designate Committee Chairs and/or Board Members at Large

Section 3. Directors and officers shall serve the term for which they are elected or until replaced. No officer shall serve more than three consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 4. Duties of the officers are as follows:

- ✧ **President:** The President shall preside at general membership meetings of the Association and meetings of its Board of Directors. The President shall appoint a parliamentarian and invoke Robert's Rules of Order whenever he/she deems it necessary for any meeting, and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors. The President shall have the authority to represent the Association in its relations with other persons and organizations, except as otherwise provided herein.
- ✧ **Vice-President:** The Vice-President shall act as the aide to the President and shall preside at meetings in the absence of the President.
- ✧ **Secretary:** The Secretary shall maintain accurate minutes of meetings of the general membership and meetings of the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall be the custodian of all official records of the Association, including the membership list and perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may prescribe.

- ✧ **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall have custody of all funds and shall keep a full and accurate account of all receipts, disbursements, and expenditures of the Association. The Treasurer shall present a financial report at each general membership meeting of the Association and meetings of the Board of Directors. All checks shall require two signatures.

Section 5. The Association or its Board of Directors shall not enter into any contract in the name of the Association, except as recommended by the Board and approved by the general membership.

Section 6. The business and affairs of the Association shall be managed by its Board of Directors. The Directors shall in all cases act as a Board, and may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of meetings and management of the Association as they may deem proper.

Section 7. At any meeting of the Board of Directors, a simple majority shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 8. The Board of Directors shall meet at least _____ times each year.

Section 9. Any member of the Board of Directors may be removed for cause by a majority vote of the members attending a general membership meeting of the Association.

Section 10. In the event that a vacancy occurs in the Board of Directors, such vacancy shall be appointed by the President to fill the remainder of the term.

Section 11. No member of the Board of Directors of the Association shall receive any form of compensation from any source in connection with the discharge of his/her duty as an officer.

Section 12. A meeting of the Board of Directors may be called at any time by the following:

- ✧ President
- ✧ Majority of the Board of Directors

Article VI. – Meetings

Section 1. There shall be a minimum of _____ meetings per year of the general membership of the Association. The election of the Board of Directors and Officers and the presentation of the annual reports shall be held at the _____ meeting.

Section 2. A meeting of the general membership may be called at any time by any of the following:

- ✧ President
- ✧ Majority of the Board of Directors
- ✧ A petition signed by no less than the number of members required for a quorum.

Section 3. Notice of any meeting of the general membership or meeting of the Board of Directors shall be given in accordance with procedures established so as to assure reasonable and sufficient notice. Notice shall state the place, date and time of the meeting and the general purpose for which the meeting is held. Notice shall be given a minimum of _____ calendar days prior to the meeting. Notice may be given via flyers, email, postcards, or neighborhood newsletter.

Section 4. A majority of the active individual membership at any meeting of the general membership for which proper notice has been given shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business of this Association.

Article VII. – Subcommittees

Section 1. The President, with the approval of the Board of Directors, may create and appoint standing or temporary subcommittees with such authority and responsibilities as it deems necessary for the accomplishment of the purposes of the Association. Chairpersons of the standing subcommittees shall be members of the Board of Directors.

Section 2. The standing subcommittees shall include:

- ✧ Membership
- ✧ Communications
- ✧ Welcoming/Social
- ✧ Crime and Safety
- ✧ Code Compliance
- ✧ Beautification
- ✧ City Liaison

Article VIII. – Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. The conduct of business of the _____ Neighborhood Association shall be governed by the rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised.

Section 2. The resolution of any internal dispute or any grievance against the Association or its Board of Directors shall be the responsibility of a mediation committee comprised of three persons elected from the general membership.

Article IX. – Amendments to Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended at any duly convened general membership meeting of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given at the general membership meeting immediately prior to the one at which the vote will be taken.

Article X. – Miscellaneous

The Association shall not endorse a political candidate or political position. The Association may monitor and act upon zoning and local community issues which affect the neighborhood association area. Any member, including officers, directors and committee chairmen, may, as an individual, support political candidate of their choosing.

Article XI. – Dissolution

This Association may be dissolved by the same procedure as that provided for amending the bylaws. All debts of the Association must be paid and provisions made for the responsible disposition of any assets.

These bylaws adopted this _____ day of _____, _____.

President _____

Secretary _____



SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA

INITIAL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEETING 7:00-8:30 PM

AGENDA

- ✧ Meet and Greet
- ✧ Welcome and Introductions
- ✧ Icebreaker
- ✧ Brief History of Organizing Efforts
(The “Why” of Neighborhood Associations)
- ✧ Presentation on Crime and Safety in the Neighborhood*
(*choose an issue identified at previous core group meeting that resonates in your neighborhood)
- ✧ Large or small group brainstorm of Key Issues in the Neighborhood
To guide future programming and committee work
- ✧ Set next meeting date(s) and location(s)



SAMPLE MINUTES/MEETING NOTES

MEETING MINUTES

Neighborhood Association

January 16, 2014

Forty neighborhood residents attended the launch of the first neighborhood association meeting at the local elementary school library on January 16, 2014.

Mr. Smith, a member of the core organizing group provided welcoming remarks and asked everyone to introduce themselves, state how long they have lived in the neighborhood and one thing they love most about living there.

Mr. Smith and the five residents involved in organizing the new neighborhood association spoke about the importance of organizing:

- ✧ Community Building
- ✧ Neighbor Improvement
- ✧ Advocacy Voice to the City
- ✧ Safety in the neighborhood

Officer Chinn of the Bellevue Police Department provided a 30 minute overview of recent burglaries in the neighborhood and in the City overall and provided resources on crime mapping and how to keep your home from being a target.

Residents broke into smaller groups to brainstorm key issues in the neighborhood and areas the new association will want to focus on in the coming months. Themes that emerged were:

- ✧ Preservation of green space
- ✧ Traffic issues and excessive speeding in the neighborhood
- ✧ Code compliance issues – construction noise,
- ✧ Yard maintenance issues
- ✧ More opportunities to gather and get to know neighbors, maybe a summer block party/picnic

Sign up sheets were passed around for neighbors to indicate their interest in serving on a committee to explore each of these areas. If you are interested or have neighbors interested in helping, they can contact Mrs. Jones at mjones@comcast.net to get involved.

Next meeting was set for March 15 at 7 p.m. at the elementary school library. Mr. Jones will invite the traffic calming department at the City to make a brief presentation. People will be asked to express interest in serving on a board of directors to be elected later this Spring.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

SAMPLE ATTENDANCE ROSTER

Date: _____ Association Name: _____

Name	Address	Phone Number and E-mail address
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		

Secretary/Membership Committee Use Only:

Date Form Received: _____ Amount Received: \$ _____

Form of Payment: ☐ Cash or ☐ Check Check #: _____

FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS FOR NEIGHBORHOODS

Block Watch	425-452-6915
Code Compliance	425-452-4570
Development Services – Permitting	425-452-6800
Emergency Preparedness	425-452-7923
Mini City Hall	425-452-2800
Neighborhood Outreach	425-452-6836
Neighborhood Mediation	425-452-4091
Neighborhood Traffic Calming	425-452-6160



